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Ordeal on Blazing Freighter

RADIO MAN BURNED SENDING MESSAGES

The escape of 55 people, including the captain's wife, from the blazing Glasgow cargo ship Forresbank (5,155 tons) was described when they were landed at Durban yesterday.

The ship, abandoned by the crew after a fire in the engine-room on Sunday night 18 miles off the Pondoland coast, south of Durban, ran aground during the night, still blazing, and a representative of Bank Line, the owners, said the tug A. M. Campbell, which had stood by, was returning to Durban.

The master, Capt. B. T. Simonds, with his wife, 13 white officers and 40 Indian seamen, were brought to Durban by the Ellerman Lines City of York. One Indian seaman, trapped in the engine-room, is presumed to have died.

Wireless Operator A. Lamont, of Aberdeen, stayed at his post until the fire scorched his arms and he could send no more messages.

A statement by Capt. Simonds said the fire spread rapidly to the accommodation above and to the boat deck.

"The flames were so fierce we lost one of four boats before we could clear it. After two hours things were so bad I ordered the ship to be abandoned and we pulled away.

"We drifted about for 2½ hours when, as the flames seemed to have died down we went alongside and with 15 crew reboarded the ship.

"Soon afterwards there was a tremendous explosion and three of the crew who had gone aft were cut off from us by a raging inferno.

"We went back to the boat and tried to rescue them but could not get alongside. The ship was rolling and tossing with the propellers showing clear at times."

The senior apprentice, Mr. B. J. Masey, of Newhaven, Sussex, who with the fourth engineer, Mr. P. Docherty, of Greenock, and the second enginer, Mr. J. Wilson, of Falkirk, was trapped by the explosion, said the flames had soared 50 feet into the air. The captain's boat had tried unsuccessfully to come alongside.

It was suggested they jump but on looking down they saw several sharks circling. They were finally taken off by the City of York's motor-boat.

197 Candidates for Algerian Election

The Algerian Central Election Commission announced yesterday that a total of 53 lists of candidates had been officially registered for the General Election on November 30—one more than stated when lists closed on Sunday night. This brings the total number of candidates to 129 Moslems and 68 Europeans.

Doctors' Pay Report Next Summer

Mr. Derek Walker-Smith, the Minister of Health, said yesterday in the Commons that the Royal Commission on Doctors' Pay expects to be able to submit its report about next summer.

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